GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TRIBAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2046
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2005
TORTURING OF TRIBAL PEOPLE
Barad Shri Jashubhai Dhanabhai

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the tribal people are being tortured by the Forest Department;

(b) if so, the number of such cases came to the notice of the Government during the last three years; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to protect the tribal people from such torture?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH)

(a) to (c) During eviction by the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations of the ineligible encroaehers, including post-1980 encroachers, from forest land in a time bound manner, some genuine forest dwellers, including tribals, could not be distinguished from ineligible encroachers, which resulted in hardship to them

To save genuine forest dwellers, including tribals, from such hardship, the Ministry of Environment & Forests, on 21.12.2004, requested all the States/UTs not to resort to eviction of forest dwellers, including tribals, other than ineligible encroachers till complete survey was carried out for recognition of such people and their rights on forest land as provided in the guidelines dated 18.9.1990 issued under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. This was reiterated on 17.10.2005. The Ministry of Environment & Forest, on 03.11.2005, issued detailed revised guidelines for verification/ recognition of such rights on forest land. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has been mandated to formulate a Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill to redress the historical injustice done to tribal communities and for clear assertion of their legal rights. The matter has been processed as per the procedure laid down for the purpose.